



Growing Sustainably in Athens-Clarke County IV

Progress Report and Further Recommendations

March 2007

Compiled by

- Athens Grow Green Coalition
- Athens Land Trust
- Athens-Clarke County
Community Tree Council
- Athens-Clarke Heritage
Foundation, Inc.
- BikeAthens
- CleanAirAthens.org
- Georgia River Network
- Joseph LeConte Group of the
Sierra Club
- Keep Athens-Clarke County
Beautiful
- MICAH's Mission
- Northeast Georgia Children's
Environmental Health
Coalition
- Oconee River Land Trust
- Oconee Rivers Audubon
Society
- The Oconee Rivers Greenway
Commission
- Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc.
- Students and Educators for
Ecological Design and
Sustainability (SEEDS)
- Upper Oconee Watershed
Network

Growing Sustainably in Athens-Clarke County IV: Progress Report and Further Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

Growing Sustainably IV was compiled by representatives of seventeen local environmentally-concerned citizens' organizations to assist the Mayor and Commission in making decisions about growth and development that are fair and equitable, protect our environment, and reflect the community's vision as expressed in our Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

As in past years, the responses from Athens-Clarke County staff to the *Growing Sustainably* report were very helpful in the compilation of this latest document, particularly regarding the list of accomplishments to date. There is a broad consensus on the part of the seventeen participating organizations that ACC management should formalize their annual reporting and response process to provide continuing staff participation in the creation of the annual *Growing Sustainably* document and its recommendations.

The report describes Recent Major Accomplishments; High Priority Issues for 2007; Detailed Issues and Recommended Actions; Accomplishments Since 2003 (the year of the first *Growing Sustainably* report); and Mission and Contact Information for the participating organizations.

For *Growing Sustainably IV*, two new "issues" categories, Climate Change and Solid Waste, have been added to the ten categories of past year's reports. The categories are organized as follows:

1. Climate Change
2. Air Quality
3. Water Quality
4. Water Supply
5. Natural Areas
6. Urban Environments
7. Urban Parks
8. Solid Waste
9. Affordable Housing
10. Public Vision
11. Public Participation
12. Regional Planning.

Finally, where issues and recommended actions align with recommendations from the Partners for a Prosperous Athens, we have indicated that correlation.

1. RECENT MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2006 Athens-Clarke County made progress on all four Air Quality priority goals identified in *Growing Sustainably III*, and had other significant achievements as well. A complete list of accomplishments is included in Section 4.

Air Quality

- *ACC Department of Transportation and Public Works initiated a pilot project to explore the use of bio-diesel and other alternative, cleaner fuels for county vehicles.*
- *The ACC Police Department improved enforcement of traffic laws by adding more red-light cameras to encourage transportation modes other than the automobile.*
- *The Mayor & Commission increased operating funds for Athens Transit, which allowed Athens Transit to add evening service to several routes.*
- *The Mayor & Commission funded the position of Community Forester to a full-time level.*

Water Quality

- *The Mayor & Commission adopted an illicit discharge and illegal connections ordinance to curb improper use of storm drains.*
- *Transportation & Public Works increased the issuance of stop work orders to address erosion and sedimentation violations.*

Urban Environments

- *The Mayor & Commission designated downtown Athens a local historic district and adopted design guidelines to protect its unique character.*
- *The Mayor & Commission funded a new Urban /Community Planner position in the Planning Department to facilitate proactive neighborhood and corridor planning.*
- *The Trees for Tomorrow Program through the Community Tree Council has been re-established to support and increase tree planting on public sites (i.e. on road rights of way, around public buildings, within parks, and at our schools).*

Solid Waste

Athens-Clarke County Recycling Division initiated recycling at University of Georgia football games.

Affordable Housing

The Mayor & Commission helped create Partners for a Prosperous Athens, a partnership with large employers, housing providers, county agencies, the Board of Education, the University of Georgia, and non-governmental organizations to bring all sectors to work on affordable housing and other issues related to poverty.

2. HIGH PRIORITY ISSUES FOR 2007

Despite the significant progress made in many areas, much remains to be done to ensure that Athens-Clarke County is a healthy community for all its residents. There are a number of new issues that have come to prominence over the past year, and others that still need attention.

Climate Change

- *Develop, adopt, and implement an Athens-Clarke County Energy Plan. Components of this plan should include:*
 - *Targets and strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by the county;*
 - *Monitoring to ensure that the targets are being met;*
 - *A lighting ordinance that emphasizes energy use reduction;*
 - *Encouragement of use of energy-efficient lighting and appliances by individuals, businesses, and partner agencies (such as the Athens Housing Authority);*
 - *Promotion of green building techniques; and*
 - *Comparison of energy use in the new LEED buildings with the old buildings to quantify savings.*
- *Enforce traffic laws, including speed limits and pedestrian right-of-way in crosswalks to encourage transportation modes other than the automobile. (PPA)*
- *Increase operating funds for Athens Transit. (PPA)*
- *Create a new Alternative Transportation Coordinator position in Transportation & Public Works to ensure that alternative transportation needs are incorporated into all transportation decisions, and to seek outside funding.*

Water Quality

- *Strengthen our erosion & sedimentation ordinance.* Recent research indicates that we are less constrained by state law than we had thought.
- *Develop an onsite wastewater (septic) system installation, maintenance and education program, and possibly an ordinance, to ensure that these systems do not contribute to water quality problems.*

Natural Areas

- *Expand the environmental areas ordinance to include lakes and wetlands.*
- *Strengthen protections for trees within stream buffers in the environmental areas ordinance.*
- *Develop, adopt, and implement a Transferable Development Rights program.*

Urban Environments

- *Require approval of a post-demolition plan for historic properties before actual demolition can occur, perhaps giving time to locate buyers for significant properties.*

Solid Waste

Develop a plan to extend the life of the landfill. This will save money and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, since 2/3 of our landfill's buried waste consists of organic matter that releases methane as it decomposes. Specific suggestions include:

- *Raise tipping fees to discourage use of the landfill for materials that could be reused or recycled or disposed of at a Construction & Demolition landfill, and to encourage waste haulers to bring recyclable materials to the Materials Recycling Facility;*
- *Enact landfill disposal bans and/or surcharges on recyclable materials. Phase in starting with cardboard;*
- *Put conditions requiring better recycling service on permits of private haulers who serve ACC;*
- *Increase rate differential between 30- and 60-gallon garbage cans to encourage recycling;*
- *Begin to enact policies requiring producers – rather than the ACC Solid Waste Department – to be responsible for product waste. “Extended Producer Responsibility” is a policy approach to shifting responsibility for product waste management from local government to the people who control product design and marketing.*

Affordable Housing

- *Implement the recommendations of Partners for a Prosperous Athens. (PPA)*

Public Vision

- *Use consistency with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and its Guiding Principles to guide all re-zoning and variance decisions and infrastructure planning.*
- *Keep environmental principles in mind when making decisions about the Navy School's re-use, and protect the valuable tree resources on this site. It could become an example of implementing the smart growth ideals of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.*

3. DETAILED ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

New entries are denoted with an asterisk.

1.	CLIMATE CHANGE threatens the earth's environment, and our community is not immune from its impacts. Emissions from motor vehicles and energy production are major contributors. (See also recommendations 8.1 in Solid Waste and 9.4 and 9.6 in Affordable Housing, below.)	Type of Action
1.1*	Develop, adopt, and implement a county energy plan. Components of this plan should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets and strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by the county; • Monitoring to ensure that the targets are being met; • A lighting ordinance that emphasizes energy use reduction; • Encouragement of use of energy-efficient lighting and appliances by individuals, businesses, and partner agencies (such as the Athens Housing Authority); • Promotion of green building techniques; and • Comparison of energy use in the new LEED buildings with the old buildings to quantify savings. 	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing
1.2*	Implement policies of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing
1.3	Participate in other national efforts to educate the public and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the <i>Cities for Climate Protection</i> program and <i>Focus the Nation</i> .	Policy Ongoing
1.4	Create a new Alternative Transportation Coordinator position in Transportation & Public Works to ensure that alternative transportation needs are incorporated into all transportation decisions, and to seek outside funding.	Policy Budget
1.5	To reduce automobile emissions and improve air quality, encourage alternative transportation by improving the safety of those who walk, cycle and use transit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce traffic laws, including speed limits and pedestrian right-of-way in crosswalks; • Reduce speed limits on main corridors and neighborhood thoroughfares, where appropriate; • Add red light cameras to major intersections where appropriate. 	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing (PPA)
1.6	To reduce automobile emissions and improve air quality, encourage alternative transportation by improving transit infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase operating funds in ACC budget for Athens Transit; • Encourage state level legislation to provide state operating funds for Athens Transit; • Work on agreements with large local employers to encourage ridership; • Support the development of the "Brain Train" passenger rail service to Atlanta. 	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing (PPA)
1.7	To reduce automobile emissions and improve air quality, encourage alternative transportation by improving cycling infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the ACC Bicycle Master Plan; • Take all opportunities to implement the ACC Bicycle Master Plan and planned bicycle facilities in other Madison Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) plans; • Re-direct some funds for locally funded projects in the MACORTS Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) toward bicycle and/or pedestrian uses; • Adhere to all established plans for alternative transportation infrastructure. • Increase funds in ACC budget for bicycle facilities; • Encourage the addition of bike parking facilities in commercial establishments; • Attend to safety details such as positioning sewer grates perpendicular to traffic flow and repainting stripes that separate bike lanes, and regularly sweeping bike lanes free of debris; • Pursue federal Transportation Enhancement funding. 	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing (PPA)

1.8	<p>Improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from county vehicles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and expand the bio-diesel pilot program; • Replace aging county vehicles with hybrids or other clean alternative fuel vehicles when possible. 	Policy Budget
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2.	AIR QUALITY is degraded by increased auto emissions due to more cars traveling longer distances and idling in more traffic jams, by minimal standards for commercial and industrial emissions, by open burning, and by diminishment of our community's tree canopy. Decreased air quality has public health implications, particularly for especially vulnerable groups such as children. (See also recommendations 1.4 to 1.8 in <i>Climate Change, above.</i>)	Type of Action
2.1*	Set air quality targets to ensure that we do not move into non-attainment status under the Clean Air Act.	Policy
2.2*	Monitor new tree protection ordinance, review tree canopy cover, and implement changes in the ordinance when necessary to achieve goals of canopy study.	Policy Ordinance Ongoing
2.3	Fund community forest tree cover canopy study every 5 years to provide information specific to ACC for land use planning.	Budget
2.4	Fund ACC Community Tree Council to educate the public regarding the need to conserve tree canopy.	Budget
2.5	Continue to encourage tree and/or shrub plantings along all possible driving corridors for pollution mitigation.	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing
2.6*	Consider financial incentives to encourage local industry to invest in pollution abatement technology.	Policy Budget
2.7	Explore establishing an air quality & health monitoring partnership with UGA and other state agencies.	Policy Budget
2.8	Establish regulations to limit the use of leaf blowers, a significant source of particulate matter.	Policy Ordinance

3.	WATER QUALITY is degraded by erosion and sedimentation from land-disturbing activities, urban stormwater, run-off, stream erosion, illegal commercial, industrial and residential dumping, and leaks/failures in private septic and public wastewater treatment and distribution systems. See also --- in <i>Natural Areas, below.</i>)	Type of Action
3.1*	Strengthen erosion & sedimentation control ordinance.	Ordinance
3.2	<p>Continue to improve enforcement of erosion and sedimentation ordinance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction of staff; • Hiring of more inspection personnel; • Training and education of all personnel involved with E&S control; • Increasing inspections and monitoring; • Education of the judiciary; • Increasing use of stop work orders when obvious and avoidable water quality violations have occurred; • Improving inter-departmental coordination to avoid issuance of certificates of occupancy until sites are stabilized; • Maintaining clear lines of responsibility between Transportation & Public Works, Building Inspections, Community Protection Division, County Attorney's Office and Municipal Court. 	Policy Budget Ongoing

3.3	<p>Develop, adopt and implement a comprehensive mass grading ordinance, applicable to all zoning categories, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize allowable cut-and-fill by requiring that the natural contours of the site be maintained and by establishing a maximum slope that can be developed; • Require minimization of site disturbance; • Require phasing of developments; • Require stabilization of each phase before next phase can begin; • Require compliance with such provisions as turbidity limits and soils stabilization. 	Ordinance
3.4*	Develop an onsite wastewater (septic) system installation, maintenance and education program, and possibly an ordinance, to ensure that these systems do not contribute to water quality problems.	Policy Ordinance Budget
3.5*	Encourage full implementation of the Watershed Management Plan by all departments.	Policy Budget Ongoing
3.6	<p>Make the following changes to the Stormwater Ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require the notification of neighbors if a developer applies for a variance; • Regulate the volume, not just the flow rate, of stormwater that may leave a site post-development. 	Ordinance
3.7	Make changes to Zoning & Development Standards based upon the Center for Watershed Protection's "Better Site Design" standards to improve stormwater management.	Policy Ordinance Ongoing
3.8	Encourage the use of permeable surfaces in site development through incentives.	Policy Ordinance Ongoing
3.9	Educate the public on the importance of vegetative cover on their home sites, and the effect that trees and shrubs can have in diminishing damage from rainfall and irrigation systems Provide educational material funds to volunteer organizations who will take on this work for the County.	Policy Budget Ongoing
3.10	<p>Educate the public on the importance of keeping waste out of stormwater drains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue storm drain decal program; • Develop and implement other educational activities. 	Policy Budget Ongoing
3.11	Implement a grease trap ordinance to protect against illegal dumping of grease into storm drains and sewers.	Ordinance
3.12	Curb improper use of storm drains by using new surveillance technology to detect violations.	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing
3.13	Research the use of development impact fees. (Free research assistance may be available from the UGA River Basin Center through an EPD water quality grant.)	Policy Ordinance
3.14	Collaborate with local environmental groups to effectively use trained volunteers to help monitor for E&S violations.	Policy Ongoing
3.15	Establish a citizen volunteer water quality committee.	Policy

4.	WATER SUPPLY is threatened by poor water quality, waste, and the lack of an effective and fair system for allocating limited water resources.	Type of Action
4.1	Create and implement a long-term comprehensive water management plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional water supply planning • A conservation rate billing structure that encourages conservation year-round • Improve enforcement of water use restrictions; • Public education for the conservation of water resources 	Policy Budget Ongoing
4.2*	Improve drinking water treatment to remove metals.	Policy Budget

5.	NATURAL AREAS are degraded or eliminated by development, with a resulting reduction of tree canopy, diminishment of wildlife habitat, loss of natural beauty, and endangerment of environmental resources such as riparian areas and rare or endangered plants. Increased noise and light pollution contribute to natural area degradation and create a more stressful environment. (See also recommendation 6.1 in Urban Environments, below.)	Type of Action
5.1*	Expand the environmental areas ordinance to include buffers on lakes and wetlands.	Ordinance
5.2*	Strengthen protections for trees within stream buffers in the environmental areas ordinance.	Ordinance
5.3	Amend riparian buffer ordinance to include clear and strict criteria for approving buffer variance requests.	Ordinance
5.4*	Use an already paved area for the east side park-and-ride lot rather than a greenfield.	Policy
5.5	Extend Site Design Standards that require identification <i>and</i> protection of all sensitive environmental areas (riparian buffers, springs, steep slopes, wetlands, etc.) to multi-family zones; include incentives for developers to protect to higher standards.	Ordinance
5.6	Deny rezonings and variances when significant environmental degradation would occur.	Policy Ongoing
5.7	Amend Zoning and Development Standards to better protect floodplains and other sensitive environmental areas.	Ordinance
5.8	Protect sensitive environmental areas as natural habitat by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee simple purchase; • Purchase of permanent conservation easements; • Participation in the new Georgia Land Conservation Program; • Using SPLOST 2005 Greenspace Acquisition fund; • Seeking additional state, federal, and private funding sources; • Leveraging funding whenever possible. 	Policy Budget Ongoing
5.9	Amend noise ordinance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include ambient industrial noise (which negatively affects wildlife environments;) • Include noise as factor in decisions about siting of industry. 	Ordinance
5.10	Amend and enforce lighting ordinance.	Ordinance Policy

5.11	Continue to improve enforcement of dumping prohibition in riparian areas.	Policy Ordinance Budget Ongoing
5.12	Develop, adopt, and implement a Transferable Development Rights program as a part of ACC Zoning and Development Standards. Such a program should be formulated to minimize potential negative effects on historic intown neighborhoods and affordable housing.	Policy Ordinance
5.13	Encourage donation of permanent conservation easements to private land trusts as a way to help attain ACC's goal of 20% protected open space by encouraging tax assessor's office to reduce property values of land under conservation easement.	Policy Ongoing
5.14	Encourage staff in their exploration of more environmentally-friendly landscape management techniques such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of ACC's integrated pest management strategy to include use of botanical pesticides in both indoor and outdoor environments; • Use of leased grazing animals as an alternative to chemical and mechanical means of controlling vegetative growth; • Naturalizing landscaped areas with use of native trees and shrubs (which can require less maintenance than non-native species) where suitable. 	Policy Budget
5.15*	Limit herbicide and flail mower use on the sides of roads by ACC, GDOT and utility companies.	Policy
5.16	Research the use of development impact fees. (Free research assistance may be available from the UGA River Basin Center through an EPD water quality grant.)	Policy Ordinance
5.17	Create another position in Leisure Services to serve under the Greenway Coordinator.	Budget
5.18	Develop policies to help keep farming viable in ACC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program funding in partnership with local farmers and land trusts; • Develop a program to promote local organic farming. 	Policy Budget (PPA)

6.	URBAN ENVIRONMENTS in Athens-Clarke County are deteriorating, reducing the health and safety of residents and creating a desire to move to undeveloped rural areas. Infrastructure improvement plans encourage sprawl rather than urban redevelopment. The appealing character of the old urban area is threatened by poor design of new development and the loss of historic structures, loss of tree canopy, tree damage by poor pruning practices within utility corridors, and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings. (See also recommendation 2.2, 2.5, and 2.8 in Air Quality and 5.12 and 5.15 in Natural Areas, above.)	Type of Action
6.1	Adopt Corridor Management Strategy with flexibility to allow for creative responses to the unique conditions of different corridors and types of corridors.	Policy Budget
6.2	Continue to strengthen enforcement of "quality of life" ordinances (e.g. noise, single family, lighting, etc.)	Policy Budget Ongoing
6.3	Develop standards to help ensure that infill development is appropriate and environmentally friendly by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring evaluation of proposed projects for hydrological and tree canopy impacts on neighboring properties; • Requiring that any potential hydrological and tree canopy impacts are mitigated; • Ensuring that lots subdivided after the passage of the Environmental Areas Ordinance in November 2004 aren't exempted from the provisions of that ordinance. 	Policy
6.4*	Take the opportunity to bury utility lines along roadways, where and whenever possible, while protecting mature trees.	Policy

6.5	Promote re-use of abandoned commercial areas and offer incentives for their development by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing unnecessary barriers to redevelopment of such properties from ACC regulations • Developing incentives to encourage such redevelopment over greenfield development. 	Policy Ordinance Budget
6.6	Develop a policy to promote the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites (sites where hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants are, or may be, present) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing unnecessary barriers to redevelopment of such properties from ACC regulations, while maintaining public health and safety as top priorities; • Exploring local incentives, such as tax credits, tax freezes, fee waivers or other financial incentives; • Continuing to seek state Legislative delegation's assistance in creating special tax allocation districts to enhance the funding for brownfield redevelopment. 	Policy Ordinance Budget
6.7	Protect the unique character of downtown Athens by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Master Plan for downtown Athens to balance development with historic preservation; • Reviewing existing zoning regulations for the downtown area, particularly height restrictions and parking requirements, to ensure their compatibility with historic preservation goals. 	Policy Ordinance
6.8	Require that permit requests involving alterations to buildings older than 50 years include an historic preservation consultation with qualified planning staff.	Policy Ordinance
6.9*	Require approval of a post-demolition plan for historic properties before actual demolition can occur, perhaps giving time to locate buyers for significant properties.	Policy Ordinance
6.10	Continue to develop and improve mechanisms to give residents a more formal role in government decisions that affect their neighborhoods.	Policy Budget

7.	URBAN PARKS and OPEN SPACES are insufficient.	Type of Action
7.1*	Preserve greenspace throughout the county by working with the Clarke County Board of Education and re-committing resources for using middle and elementary school grounds as neighborhood parks.	Policy Budget
7.2*	Create more pocket parks and other inner city greenspace so that more residents have access to natural areas.	Policy Budget
7.3	Encourage interdepartmental coordination to complete Greenway network	Policy Budget
7.4	Require all new rights-of-way acquisitions to consider negotiating for public access to trails (unless exempted by Leisure Services.)	Policy
7.5	Ensure adequate funding to maintain existing urban parks, greenways, and open space through SPLOST, capital funds, and seeking state, federal and private sources of funds.	Policy Budget

8.	SOLID WASTE is a growing problem as our landfill approaches its capacity.	Type of Action
8.1*	Develop a plan to extend the life of the landfill. This will save money and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, since 2/3 of our landfill's buried waste consists of organic matter that releases methane as it decomposes. Specific suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise tipping fees to discourage use of the landfill for materials that could be reused or recycled or disposed of at a Construction & Demolition landfill, and to encourage waste haulers to bring recyclable materials to the Materials Recycling Facility; • Enact landfill disposal bans and/or surcharges on recyclable materials. Phase in starting with cardboard; • Put conditions requiring better recycling service on permits of private haulers who serve ACC; • Increase rate differential between 30- and 60-gallon garbage cans to encourage recycling; 	Policy Budget Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to enact policies requiring producers – rather than the ACC Solid Waste Department – to be responsible for product waste. “Extended Producer Responsibility” is a policy approach to shifting responsibility for product waste management from local government to the people who control product design and marketing. 	
8.2*	Ban products containing mercury, such as switches and fluorescent lights, from the landfill. Such products release elemental mercury into the air, which becomes highly toxic organic methyl mercury in water.	Policy
8.3*	Require all ACC departments to recycle and reduce input to the landfill. ACC should be a recycling role model for the community.	Policy Budget Ongoing

9.	AFFORDABLE HOUSING near employment areas is in decline and contributes to environmentally unsound sprawl development. This should be a priority issue for 2007. (See also recommendation 5.12 in Natural Areas, above.)	Type of Action
9.1*	Implement the recommendations from Partners for a Prosperous Athens.	Policy Ordinance Budget (PPA)
9.2	Create inclusionary zoning regulations that require a percentage of new residential construction to include homes permanently affordable to those having low to moderate incomes.	Ordinance (PPA)
9.3	Consider effect on existing affordable housing when making decisions on rezonings by directing Planning and the Dept. of Human and Economic Development (HED) to work more closely.	Policy (PPA)
9.4*	Require that all affordable housing financed with public funds be energy-efficient and use non-VOC paints and sealers.	Policy (PPA)
9.5*	Require that all newly constructed affordable housing (and, where feasible, rehabilitated housing) financed with public funds be visitable (i.e. accessible to people with disabilities.)	Policy (PPA)
9.6	Extend transit to existing affordable housing, including mobile home parks.	Policy Budget (PPA)
9.7	Devote more federal Community Development Block Grant funding to innovative housing projects.	Policy Budget (PPA)
9.8	Apply successful models for promoting affordable housing in communities similar to Athens (e.g. Raleigh-Durham, Chapel Hill).	Policy Budget (PPA)

10.	The PUBLIC’S VISION is not being articulated and enforced by public policy.	Type of Action
10.1	Follow Guiding Principles of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in all land use decisions.	Policy Ongoing
10.2*	Conduct a buildout analysis of our current zoning to determine its effects on ACC’s landscape and carrying capacity of infrastructure.	Policy Budget
10.3*	Keep environmental principles in mind when making decisions about the Navy School’s re-use, and protect valuable tree resources on this site. It could become an example of implementing the smart growth ideals of the current Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	Policy

10.4	Make all planning decisions regarding infrastructure (utilities, roadways, solid waste facilities, etc.) consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	Policy Ongoing
10.5	Maintain high priority for existing ACC environmental services and natural resources, and protect these from budget cuts.	Policy Budget Ongoing
10.6	Re-design enforcement processes to be less bureaucratic, more effective.	Policy Ongoing
10.7	Conduct environmental audit of all ACC departments	Policy Budget
10.8	Require environmental Best Management Practices of all departments	Policy Budget Ongoing
10.9	Coordinate ACC, UGA, and the ACC community in all areas and at all levels to improve efficiency and reduce negative impact on the environment, making better use of resources at UGA. Explore incentives for businesses that have a good environmental record, positive impact on the environment, don't pollute and/or don't consume excessive resources.	Policy Ongoing
10.10	Work with Economic Development Foundation, Industrial Development Authority, and environmental groups to develop incentives to attract and retain businesses that provide quality jobs, have a low impact on natural resources, have a good environmental record, and have a positive impact on the environment.	Policy Budget Ongoing
10.11	Ensure that organizations that promote environmental protection are not under-represented, compared with industry organizations, on citizen committees studying environmental policy issues.	Policy
10.12	Assist appropriate citizen advocacy groups (i.e. Athens Grow Green Coalition, BikeAthens, Clean Air Athens) in gaining a seat on the MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee.	Policy
10.13	Appoint a stakeholder roundtable with government, business, nonprofit, and citizen representatives to research and consider the adoption of the Precautionary Principle as an alternative to risk management decision-making.	Policy
10.14*	Increase Mayor & Commission oversight of Industrial Development Authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit IDA books; • Ask for full vote of Commission to approve IDA bonds; • Request public disclosure of environmental criteria used in decision-making by the IDA. 	Policy
10.15	Create guidelines that ensure that the IDA's actions do not preclude future business by allowing dirty ones today; provide more jobs for ACC residents; and a "clawback" provision that calls for beneficiaries to forfeit tax waivers if they do not deliver promised jobs.	Policy
10.16*	Aggressively court "green" technology companies.	Policy Budget

11.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION in the government process is hampered by a need for public education and a lack of ready access to public information.	Type of Action
11.1	Provide better access to public meetings and documents with the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videotape Planning Commission meetings, Commission work sessions and public input sessions, and archive the tapes at ACC Library; • Publish documents in PDF format (detailed agenda items, proposed plans, roadway designs, etc.) on the ACC website, with accessible archives; • Require public input forms for all departments to be published on the ACC Web site, and enable submission of input forms electronically; 	Policy Budget

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish upcoming work session agendas on the ACC website; • Publish work session documents as provided to Mayor & Commission on the ACC website in PDF format for public download prior to the meeting. 	
11.2	Educate the public on important environmental issues and the benefits of conserving valuable natural resources.	Policy Budget Ongoing
11.3	Increase effort to inform and involve traditionally under-represented groups, <i>i.e.</i> African-American and Hispanic communities.	Policy Budget
11.4	Expand Neighborhood Notification Initiative to include infrastructure as well as zoning issues.	Policy Budget
11.5	Improve notification of all ACC citizens about pending county-wide environmental issues.	Policy Budget
11.6	Devise a method to formalize the use of public comment, possibly by adding a "Public Comment" section to all commission agenda items, containing an objective breakdown of comments received.	Policy

12.	COORDINATED REGIONAL PLANNING is lacking and allows the actions of neighboring jurisdictions to undesirably impact Athens-Clarke County.	Type of Action
12.1	Form a citizen/government group to work with regional planning counterparts in neighboring counties.	Policy
12.3	Participate more actively with Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center.	Policy

4. ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2003

1.	CLIMATE CHANGE	DATE
1.1	<p>Progress has been made on making ACC government operations more energy efficient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First four LEED™-certifiable county buildings completed (not yet certified.) • Six projects were registered as LEED™ projects (East Athens Dance Center, two police sub-stations, the Family Protection Center, the new fire station, and the Public Utilities environmental Services building.) • Commission adopted requirement that all ACC capital and SPLOST-funded construction projects meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) standards for sustainable design. Staff has implemented policy and procedure to apply it to more than just large building projects. 	<p>2006</p> <p>2004 – 2005</p> <p>2004</p>
1.2	ACC began a pilot project to explore the use of bio-diesel and other alternative, cleaner fuels for county vehicles. The pilot program uses B10 fuel, and all other diesel vehicles in the ACC fleet (not including Athens Transit) are running on B5 fuel.	2006
1.3	Commission funded the position of Community Forester to a full-time level.	2006
1.4	<p>Progress was made on the east side Rail-Trail project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds for acquiring more rails-to-trails project easements were released; • Mayor & Commission prevented complete destruction of rail bed by private developers. 	2006
1.5	<p>Commission has improved enforcement of traffic laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added red light cameras; • Added motorcycle patrolmen to the police force staff. 	<p>2006</p> <p>2005</p>
1.6	<p>Transit infrastructure has been improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission increased operating funds for Athens Transit to allow it to add evening service hours on some routes. • The Multi-Modal Transportation Center opened, increasing efficiency and convenience of Athens Transit. • Approved Bus Stop Improvements and Transit Vehicle Replacement programs for SPLOST 2005 list. 	<p>2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>February 2005</p>
1.7	<p>Commission has improved pedestrian infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamped criteria for sidewalk prioritization; • Conveyed new School Zone status along Lumpkin Street near Barrow School including signs, flashing lights, reduction of posted speed limits; • Some new sidewalks installed; • Approved Sidewalk Improvement Project for list of projects funded by SPLOST 2005; • Adopted crosswalk standards. 	<p>2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>February 2005</p> <p>January 2004</p>
1.8	<p>Commission and Transportation & Public Works have improved cycling infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second portion of Lumpkin Street reconfigured to include bicycle lanes; • Additional funding provided for bicycle projects in the FY2007 budget; • Re-integrated Prince Avenue into Bicycle Master Plan; • Attended to safety details such as positioning sewer grates perpendicular to traffic flow upon request; • Sought and received Congressional allocation for Rail-Trail and Greenway projects; • Sought and received Transportation Enhancement funds for Rail-Trail (re-allocated to Research Road bike lanes;) • Included several dedicated, but unfunded, bicycle projects in the MACORTS TIP; • Rail-Trail Project preliminary engineering and feasibility study funded & complete; • Completed several high connectivity restripings and minor construction projects; • First portion of Lumpkin Street reconfigured to include bicycle lanes. 	<p>May 2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>March 2004</p> <p>2003 – 2005</p> <p>July 2005</p> <p>March 2004</p> <p>June 2004</p> <p>August 2003</p> <p>2003, 2004</p> <p>August 2005</p>

1.9	Mayor Davison signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.	2005
1.10	Staff committed to the Energy Star Courthouse Campaign.	2004

2.	AIR QUALITY (see also 1.2 – 1.8 in Climate Change, above.)	DATE
2.1	Commission adopted controls on demolition practices to protect the public from airborne particulate toxic materials as well as “fugitive” dust.	2005
2.2	Commission passed 24-hour smoking ban to protect indoor air quality.	July 2005
2.3	Commission adopted transportation corridor map and code section that protects future transportation corridors, including some greenways and rail-trail projects, from being compromised by private development.	August 2005
2.4	Commission adopted a year-round ban on open burning.	March 2003

3.	WATER QUALITY	DATE
3.1	Commission adopted an illicit discharge and illegal connection ordinance.	2006
3.2	Commission adopted interim mass grading text amendments.	August 2005
3.3	Commission adopted new erosion & sedimentation control ordinance.	June 2004
3.4	<p>Transportation & Public Works has improved enforcement of erosion and sedimentation control regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More enforcement personnel hired; • Increased use of stop work orders when obvious and avoidable water quality violations have occurred; • Improved inter-departmental coordination to avoid issuance of certificates of occupancy until sites are stabilized. 	June 2004 – present
3.5	Commission adopted new stormwater management ordinance that includes provisions for improved water quality, channel protection, post-development stormwater management performance criteria and long-term maintenance and inspection provisions.	June 2004
3.6	<p>Transportation & Public Works has begun implementing the new stormwater ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Stormwater Advisory Committee convened; • Additional staff hired; • Public education & outreach programs on stormwater and importance of keeping waste out of storm drains underway. 	June 2004
3.7	<p>Commission approved and Transportation & Public Works created a Stormwater Utility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated funding source for ACC Stormwater Management Program • Fee structure serves as incentive for reducing impervious surfaces to protect water quality. 	November 2004
3.8	ACC Staff have encouraged UGA to respect countywide 75-foot riparian buffer and to seek review of designs which impinge upon the buffer.	November 2004 to present
3.9	<p>Commission adopted new Environmental Areas ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes provisions for limiting development in natural floodplain areas; • 75-foot riparian buffer protection for all perennial and intermittent streams in ACC; • 150-foot buffers in industrial zones; and • Requires forestry and agricultural BMPs. 	November 2004

3.10	Public Utilities increased surveillance, maintenance, repair, upgrades and extensions of sewer lines consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	2005
3.11	Public Utilities has initiated watershed assessment to identify and resolve water quality problems.	2005
3.12	Transportation & Public Works has installed regional stormwater facilities in the Brooklyn Creek watershed.	2003
3.13	Athens Transit has added porous pavement and oil separators to its facilities.	2004

4.	WATER SUPPLY	DATE
4.	Water Conservation Committee has initiated policy changes for water wasting and drought management.	2004

5.	NATURAL AREAS	DATE
5.1	Through the efforts of the Community Tree Council, ACC received a growth award for its tree canopy protection efforts, Tree City USA program.	2006
5.2	Through the efforts of the Community Tree Council, ACC received a Schoolyard Shade grant through the Georgia Forestry Commission, one of two pilot studies in the state.	2006
5.3	Leisure Services upgraded the greenway coordinator position to facility supervisor.	2006
5.4	Commission amended Site Design Standards to require identification <i>and</i> protection of all sensitive environmental areas (riparian buffers, springs, steep slopes, wetlands, etc.) in all single-family residential zones. New stormwater ordinance also requires natural resources inventory.	2004
5.5	Commission rezoned AR district from 1 unit/acre to 1 unit/10 acres, as called for in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	October 2003
5.6	Commission amended conservation subdivision regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require <i>permanent</i> protection of open space; • Require site visit by staff and commission members before approval of subdivision; • Require environmental assessment plan to determine areas to be permanently protected as open space <i>before</i> the buildable area of site is determined; • Remove unbuildable areas (wetlands, steep slopes, etc.) from calculation of allowable density of the parcel; • Require that most protected areas are kept intact in a contiguous parcel (establish edge/area ratio); • Require that protected open space connect to protected open space of adjacent parcels; • Limit uses of protected areas to those that are not environmentally harmful (no swimming pools, ball fields, etc.); • Allow flexibility to encourage: pervious surfaces, no road curbs, narrower road widths, no streetlights; • Require undisturbed buffers between existing neighborhoods and the subdivision; • Determine where conservation subdivisions should be permitted. 	October 2003
5.7	Commission protected environmentally sensitive lands for the purpose of maintaining them as natural habitat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased 57 acres with Georgia Greenspace Program funds, including 22 acres adjacent to Rock and Shoals Natural Area, Five-Acre Woods in East Athens, and tracts adjacent to the Greenway and Sandy Creek Nature Center; • Used SPLOST Greenspace Acquisition funds to contribute 25% of the cost to purchase development rights on the Langdale Farm, leveraging USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program funds. 	June 2004 – present

5.8	<p>Commission adopted a stand alone Tree Management Ordinance to protect and enhance ACC's urban and rural community forest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established tree canopy cover percentages for each zoning classification with a 45% overall canopy cover goal. Required some amount of tree conservation on large-scale residential and commercial sites, or significant reforestation if conservation is economically infeasible. Increased the amount of open soil surface in parking lots tree islands to increase survival rate of trees. Required minimum distances between tree planting areas in parking lots to facilitate future canopy closure over pavements. Required stronger tree protection during building construction. The Champion Tree Program was formally adopted by the Community Tree Council to record the largest trees in the County. The Community Tree Council was formally approved as part of the new Community Tree Management Ordinance, albeit unfunded, to continue their volunteer work in educating the public and advising the Mayor and Commission regarding the health of our urban and rural community forest. 	June 2005
5.9	Commission approved funding and the Planning Dept. hired a full-time arborist/inspector to monitor and enforce development regulations related to trees.	2005
5.10	Commission gave high priority in SPLOST 2005 funding schedule to environment-friendly projects, including improvements to Sandy Creek Nature Center, greenspace acquisition, rail-trail construction, transit, sidewalk improvement, Pulaski Creek greenway, and relocation of Solid Waste facility.	2005
5.11	Commission adopted Greenway Network Plan.	2003

6.	URBAN ENVIRONMENTS	DATE
6.1	<p>Protected the unique character of downtown Athens by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designating downtown Athens as a Local Historic District; Developing design guidelines for new construction, historic rehabilitations, demolition, and possible other areas; 	2006
6.2	Hired an Urban /Community Planner to facilitate proactive neighborhood and corridor planning.	2006
6.3	The Trees for Tomorrow Program through the Community Tree Council has been re-established to promote and increase tree planting on public sites (i.e. on road rights of way, around public buildings, within parks, and at our schools).	2006
6.4	KACCB undertook Athens Perimeter on- and off-ramp beautification projects.	2006
6.5	Commission increased parking lots standards which included more trees per total number of cars, and trees distributed throughout the lots.	2005
6.6	Commission strengthened enforcement of "quality of life" ordinances (e.g. noise, single family, lighting, etc.) by creating the Community Protection Division.	2004
6.4	Commission and Transportation & Public Works have applied alternative solutions to sidewalk construction in order to save trees along right of way on Old West Broad Street.	2004
7.	URBAN PARKS	DATE
7.1	Commission voted to use Community Development Block Grant funds to rehabilitate an urban park (Rocksprings).	2004

8.	SOLID WASTE	DATE
8.1	Athens-Clarke County Recycling Division initiated recycling program at University of Georgia football games.	2006

9.	AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
9.1	With Partners for a Prosperous Athens, the Mayor & Commission helped create a partnership with large employers, housing providers, county agencies, the Board of Education, the University of Georgia, and non-governmental organizations to bring all sectors to work on affordable housing and other issues related to poverty.	2006

11.	PUBLIC'S VISION	DATE
11.1	ACC initiated an Environmental Management System by sequentially adopting it in selected departments and divisions with the goal of system-wide implementation in a few years.	2006
11.2	ACC switched from conventional to botanical pesticides for indoor use in county buildings.	2005
11.3	ACC initiated pilot projects in green cleaning processes and products, beginning with the fire stations and the court house, with the goal of system-wide implementation in a few years.	2004
11.4	Commission established position of ACC Environmental Coordinator.	2003

12.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	DATE
12.1	KACCB created and aired several creative Public Service Announcements (water conservation, anti-littering, and mosquito control.)	2006
12.2	Commission established Neighborhood Notification Initiative to better inform citizens of upcoming planning and zoning matters in their areas, increasing the level of citizen participation.	May 2005
12.3	Public Affairs provided better access to public meetings and documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish commission meeting minutes on the ACC Web site; • Publish detailed agenda items in PDF format on ACC website; • Planning and Transportation & Public Works allow public input by email and through Web site. 	2003 – present
12.4	Commission and Staff supported a growing number of programs to educate the public on important environmental issues and the benefits of conserving valuable natural resources, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Management Program Web site and programs; • Participation in numerous Greenfest events; • Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful activities, • Solid Waste Department Recycling Division activities. • Participation in Trees Are Great-Just Like Us (environmental education program targeted to Hispanic families.) 	2003 – present

5. PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS: MISSION & CONTACT INFORMATION

Athens Grow Green Coalition

The mission of the Athens Grow Green Coalition is to promote responsible community development and growth management policies and practices that protect natural resources, prevent sprawl, maintain a healthy economy, and preserve a high quality of life for all in the Athens region. Specific objectives are to:

1. Protect environmental quality for all by maintaining clean air, clean water, and protected green space and green infrastructure.
2. Reduce sprawl and automobile dependence by encouraging: communities that are multi-use, walkable, bikeable and connected; and improved public transportation.
3. Promote a diverse and affordable housing supply for all income levels.
4. Promote efficient development patterns that keep taxes low.
5. Attract responsible businesses and industries by maintaining a beautiful, functional, diverse community with a high quality of life.
6. Ensure that policies balance the rights and needs of the community with the rights and needs of individual property owners.

More information: www.AthensGrowGreen.com

Contacts:

Elizabeth Little, President, 542-4774 (w), elittle@uga.edu

Beth Gavrilles, Secretary, 542-7247 (w), 227-0422 (h), beth@wuplet.com

Seth Wenger, 207-0440, seth@trout.ecology.uga.edu

Areas of Expertise: ACC Zoning and Development Standards, land use policy, open space protection techniques (conservation easements, conservation subdivisions, purchase of development rights, transferable development rights, land use law.)

Athens Land Trust

The Athens Land Trust's mission is to promote quality of life through integration of community and the natural environment by preserving land, creating energy-efficient and affordable housing, and revitalizing neighborhoods.

ALT is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1994 with the dual goals of land preservation and affordable, energy efficient housing. ALT believes in a holistic approach to sustainable development which combines environmental, economic and community needs.

More information: www.AthensLandTrust.org

Contacts:

Nancy Stangle, Development, 613-0122, nancy@athenslandtrust.org

Laura Hall, Conservation, 613-0122, laura@athenslandtrust.org

Heather Benham, Housing, 613-0122, heather@athenslandtrust.org

Areas of Expertise: Open space protection, conservation easements, affordable housing.

Athens-Clarke County Community Tree Council

The Community Tree Council was established by ordinance on October 3, 2000. Its purpose is to “provide a vehicle for broad base community representation to interact with local Government, the private sector, and citizen groups; providing information, outreach, and education that promotes the responsible stewardship of trees and sustainability of community forest resources...” It consists of 15 members, composed of 14 appointed citizens who volunteer their time and the ACC Community Forester with support from the Manager of the Landscape Division of ACC Central Services.

More information: <http://athenstreets.com/>

Contacts:

David Kidd, 543-5195, davidakidd@aol.com

Maureen O’Brien, 543-0594, obnwr@yahoo.com

Areas of Expertise: Tree canopy protection.

Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, Inc.

The Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation is the leading advocate for the importance of historic preservation to the future of the Athens community. ACHF is a 700+ member organization served by a staff of two full-time employees, several part-time employees, and a twenty-five member Board of Trustees. The Foundation administers the Athens Welcome Center/Church-Waddel Brumby House Museum; acts as caretaker for the decorative arts collection of the Ware-Lyndon House Museum and shares programming responsibilities with the Lyndon House Arts Center staff; serves as the umbrella organization for Hands On Athens, in its 8th year; oversees the Athens Historic House Museum Association; operates the ACHF Revolving Fund and a historic façade easement program.

The Foundation is currently working with the newly-formed W. Hancock-Reese Street Community Association on local historic district designations for the Reese Street National Register District and the W. Hancock National Register District. The Foundation is also assisting the community with developing revitalization strategies for the two neighborhoods.

The Mission of the Foundation is to be a proactive force in developing community-wide understanding of the value of historic buildings, neighborhoods and heritage. The following four goals were adopted in July 2001 by the Foundation as part of its five-year plan.

- Goal I. Serve as the Athens area clearinghouse for historic preservation issues.
- Goal II. Effectively communicate the historic preservation message.
- Goal III. Maintain & involve existing members while actively recruiting new members in order to develop & maintain a diverse membership-based organization.
- Goal IV. Act as responsible stewards for private preservation resources.

More Information: <http://www.achfonline.org/>

Contact:

Amy Kissane, 353-1801, achf@bellsouth.net.

Areas of Expertise: Historic preservation education and advocacy, neighborhood revitalization, historic revolving funds, historic façade easements, historic resources surveys and designations.

BikeAthens

BikeAthens is a local non-profit advocacy group promoting transportation and land use policies that improve accessibility to alternative modes of transport, including pedestrian, cycling and public transit options. The primary mission of the organization is to make alternative transportation a practical, convenient, and safe option for all citizens of Athens-Clarke County. That goal is particularly important for the large portion of our population that cannot afford to drive, that choose not to drive, or who are - for reasons of youth, age, physical disability, or by law – unable to drive.

BikeAthens seeks to address the inevitable future growth of Athens in a sensible, balanced, and practical way. Efficient, effective, and environmentally sound transportation policies must include multi-modal choices that offer the potential to mitigate the ecological damage to air and water quality and the detriment to our landscapes, built environments, and sense of community that are the result of decades of unbridled dependency on automobiles for transportation needs.

More Information: www.BikeAthens.com

Contacts:

Laura Hoffman, Administrator, laurahoffman101@gmail.com

Brent Buice, Chair, brent.buice@gmail.com

Areas of Expertise: Transportation policy, transit policy, bike and pedestrian facilities design, bicycle safety education.

CleanAirAthens.org

Clean Air Athens is a group of concerned citizens, organizations, businesses and other members of the community committed to protecting human health and natural resources in Athens and in the surrounding areas from the harmful effects of air pollution. Clean Air Athens believes that all citizens have the right to breathe healthy air and that clean air is essential to a thriving economy.

More information: <http://www.cleanairathens.org>

Contacts:

Kristen Smith, 706-742-2392 kmsmith@uga.edu

Bill Sheehan, 613-0710, bill@productpolicy.org

Sarah Petit Frierson, 208-0972

Areas of Expertise: Precautionary Principle, air quality.

Georgia River Network

Georgia River Network works to ensure a clean water legacy by engaging and empowering Georgians to protect and restore our rivers from the mountains to the coast. Our goals are:

- Increase the number of people involved in the protection and management of Georgia's waters.
- Improve awareness of the issues that threaten the health of our waters.
- Establish infrastructure for the exchange of resources among parties working to improve the protection of Georgia's waters.
- Provide necessary means to advocate for the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of our waters.

More information: <http://www.garivers.org>

Contacts:

April Ingle, 706-549-4508, ingle@garivers.org

Dana Skelton, 706-549-4508, dana@garivers.org

Jesslyn Shields, 706-549-4508, jesslyn@garivers.org

Areas of expertise: Water quality, water supply, public involvement.

Joseph LeConte Group of the Sierra Club

The purposes of the Sierra Club are to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives. The Joseph LeConte Group works to further these goals in Athens and Northeast Georgia.

More information: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/leconte/>

Contact:

Andrew Hunt: 543-4329, blahblah@riseup.net

Areas of expertise: Statewide issues, environmental justice, clean air and energy, wildlands.

Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful

The Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful Commission works toward a cleaner, more beautiful community by improving attitudes and behaviors regarding the environment.

Our Goals are:

- To promote beautification efforts in the community
- To promote the proper handling of solid waste
- To maintain sustained litter reduction
- To enhance environmental awareness through education

Our Objectives are:

1. Identify and improve areas of general community concern for beautification projects.
2. Educate citizens about the proper handling of solid waste.
3. Increase community awareness of each individual's role in sustaining litter reduction by
4. Focus on the seven sources of litter.
5. Promote adequate maintenance of public and private property.
6. Expand citizen involvement in Keep Athens Beautiful sub-committees.

More Information: <http://www.keeppathensbeautiful.org/>

Contact: Stacey Farrell, 613-3501 x. 312, StaceyFarrell@co.clarke.ga.us

Areas of expertise: Solid waste, recycling, environmental education, beautification.

MICAH's Mission

Ministry to Improve Child & Adolescent Health

More Information: <http://babuice.myweb.uga.edu/MICAH/index.htm>

Contact: Jill McElheney, P.O. Box 275, Winterville, GA 30683, 706-742-7826, Micahsmission@aol.com

Areas of expertise: Children's environmental public health.

Northeast Georgia Children's Environmental Health Coalition

The NEGACEHC is a network organized to address the growing concern about toxins in the lives of children. Its focus is to educate the community on links between environmental hazards and children's health, and at the same time promote prevention and precautionary action. NEGACEHC provides environmental education (and free lunch!) to the community on the first Tuesday of every month at 12 Noon in the DFCS conference room (North Avenue, Athens).

Contact: Holly Cirri, P.O. Box 82117, Athens, GA 30608, hollycehc@yahoo.com

Areas of expertise: Children's environmental public health issues.

Oconee River Land Trust

The mission of the Oconee River Land Trust is to preserve open space in the Oconee River Watershed. We are committed to preserving many different types of land, including woods, stream corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, productive farms and forests, historic sites and scenic vistas. ORLT is a private, nonprofit organization, incorporated in 1993. We work in many different ways to preserve land; our most important method is protection through conservation easements.

More Information: www.orlt.com

Contact:

Steffney Thompson, Executive Director: 552-3138, steffney@orlt.com

Dan Hope, Chair, 546-9889, dhopeiii@uga.edu

Areas of Expertise: Conservation easements, open space protection

Oconee Rivers Audubon Society

Founded in 1991, the mission of the Oconee Rivers Audubon Society (ORAS) is to promote the preservation and restoration of wildlife habitat through environmental activism and community education. ORAS publishes a newsletter nine times per year and holds monthly meetings that are open to the public. Educational efforts include outdoor activities such as bird walks and field trips.

More Information: www.OconeeRiversAudubon.org

Contacts:

Edwige Damron, President: edamron@uga.edu

Gary Crider, Program Chair: gcrider@charter.net

Areas of Expertise: Wildlife habitat protection

The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission

The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission is a secondary agency of the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government (ACC), established by county ordinance in 1992. The Commission is advisory in nature. Since its inception it has guided the development of the Heritage Trail and North Oconee River Greenway as pilot projects in the creation of a countywide greenway plan. It successfully procured funding (mostly outside the ACC budget) for these projects and convinced ACC to establish the staff and programs to manage and maintain them. It continues to provide oversight for project construction, program management and the development of the countywide greenway network plan. It regularly makes recommendations and comments on proposed actions that affect the rivers and other environmental resources of the community. For example, it successfully lobbied for the 100-foot river and 75-foot perennial stream buffers in the county's environmental ordinance and the county adoption of a community greenspace program.

Contact: Al Ike, Chair: albertike@charter.net

Areas of Expertise: Greenway planning and maintenance, trail design, riparian and water quality issues.

Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc.

The Sandy Creek Nature Center is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that works in partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Department of Leisure Services to protect, promote and improve Sandy Creek Nature Center. Our goal is to help Sandy Creek Nature Center continue to be an exceptional facility for learning about the natural ecosystems of Piedmont Georgia and beyond, as well as our responsibility to be good stewards of our earth.

More Information: www.sandycreeknaturecenter.com/scnc/index.shtml

Contact:

Larry Dendy: 542-8078, ldendy@uga.edu

Areas of Expertise: Community education, wildlife habitat protection, local ecosystems.

Students and Educators for Ecological Design and Sustainability (SEEDS)

SEEDS is a non-profit University of Georgia organization made up of students, faculty and other members of the campus community who are interested in applying principles of ecological design and sustainability to our campus and the surrounding community. SEEDS was founded in February 2000 as a means for collaboration among future members of the new College of Environment and Design (students and faculty from the School of Environmental Design and the Institute of Ecology). The organization meets bimonthly to work on current projects as well as discuss important sustainability issues in the Athens area.

More Information: www.uga.edu/seeds

Contact:

Alfie Vick, 706-542-6550, ravick@uga.edu

Areas of Expertise: Ecological landscape design and management.

Upper Oconee Watershed Network

The Upper Oconee Watershed Network (UOWN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and improving water quality in our watershed through scientific monitoring, community-based advocacy, and education. UOWN provides a means of bringing together a diverse citizenry with a common interest in the protection of streams and rivers in the Upper Oconee Watershed, which drains all or part of eighteen counties in northeast Georgia. UOWN strives to achieve a greater level of public awareness about local water issues and to formulate interactive community solutions for long-term watershed protection.

More Information: www.uown.org

Contacts:

Jessica Sterling, President: sterling@uga.edu

Brenda Rashleigh, brenda_vt@hotmail.com

Areas of Expertise: water quality monitoring, water quality and conservation education.